

ARIZONA CODE OF JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

Part 5: Court Operations

Chapter 3: Court Security

Section: 5-301: Court Security Standards

A. Definitions. In this section, unless otherwise specified, the following definitions apply:

“Administrator” means superior court administrator, justice court administrator, or municipal court administrator.

“Court facility” means any building and its surrounding property such as landscaped areas, parking areas, connecting corridors, or adjacent common areas, in which court personnel and court operations are housed.

“Court personnel” means employee of the court.

“Courthouse” means all areas within and including the exterior walls of a court building, or if a court does not occupy the entire building, that portion of the building used for the administration and operation of the court.

“Courtroom” means an area of a “courthouse” as defined herein, where a judicial officer conducts a proceeding.

“High risk” means measurable or identifiable factors that correlate to the probability of personal injury, property damage, or disruption of court proceedings. Factors may include: cases with multiple victims; cases involving multiple offenders; homicides involving intimate partners or family relationships; cases involving feature articles, significant media coverage, or demonstrations, protests, or marches in relation to the case events; and cases involving other significant public attention.

“Incident” means an action or communication that causes or threatens to cause personal injury, property damage, or disruption of the business of a court.

“Threat” means a communication of intention to inflict pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action against a person or court facility or any condition that negatively impacts maintaining the security of a court, judicial officer, or court personnel.

“Presiding judge” means, for superior court, justice courts, and consolidated justice/municipal courts, the superior court presiding judge or a designee who may be an administrator; for municipal courts, the municipal court presiding judge or a designee who may be an administrator; for appellate courts, the chief justice or chief judge or a designee.

B. Applicability.

1. These security standards apply to:

- a. The supreme court, including the Administrative Office of Courts (AOC), the court of appeals, and all superior, justice, and municipal courts of Arizona.
 - b. All judicial officers and court personnel located within a courthouse.
2. Courts co-located with non-court entities must coordinate with non-court departments and agencies in the court facility to ensure that security standards are implemented to fulfill the purpose of the standards.

C. Purpose.

1. The following security standards are promulgated to ensure the safety and security of employees and customers of Arizona courts and define the roles and responsibilities of judicial officers and court personnel in complying with the security standards.
2. This section is intended to be a statement of general purpose and procedure which establishes a flexible framework for courts' policy-making regarding security of court facilities, court personnel, and the public while recognizing the wide range of needs and circumstances which exist in counties across the state.

D. Governance and Administration.

1. County Security and Emergency Preparedness Committee (County SEPC).
 - a. The presiding judge of the county shall establish a court security and emergency preparedness committee (County SEPC) chaired by the presiding judge of the county or designee.
 - b. The County SEPC shall consist of a representative cross-section of each Local SEPC in the county. The presiding judge may appoint other members as deemed appropriate.
 - c. The County SEPC shall meet biannually.
 - d. The duties of each County SEPC include, but are not limited to, setting goals for implementation of the security standards; review of local court security plans, policies, and procedures; review of local court security assessments; review of security-related reports; coordination of court security needs throughout the county; and ensuring continuous court security improvement.
2. Local Security and Emergency Preparedness Committee (Local SEPC)
 - a. Each courthouse or court facility shall have a Court Security and Emergency Preparedness Committee (Local SEPC) chaired by the presiding judge of the court or designee.

- b. Members of the Local SEPC shall be appointed by the chairperson and members shall include representation from local first responders. Membership may include representatives from agencies co-located in a shared facility.
 - c. Local SEPCs shall meet quarterly.
 - d. The duties of each Local SEPC include, but are not limited to, implementation of the security standards; development of court security policies and procedures; development and allocation of resources necessary for court security; and coordination of security assessments, security drills, and testing of security equipment.
- 3. Court Security Resources. The AOC shall:
 - a. Prepare written materials regarding practices, guidelines, model policies and procedures, a security plan template, and other recommendations to aid courts in implementing these security standards.
 - b. Adopt, as necessary, administrative policies and procedures consistent with these standards.
- 4. Court Security Assessments.
 - a. All courts shall conduct court security assessments triennially.
 - b. Court security assessments shall be shared with a court's Local SEPC. Security assessments shall be made available to the County SEPC and the AOC as needed. and the County SEPC.
 - c. Court operational reviews shall include verification that security assessments have occurred triennially.
- 5. Security Incident Responses and Reporting.
 - a. Every court shall have a policy and procedure for court employees and judicial officers to report a security threat or security incident.
 - b. Every court shall provide its employees with appropriate contact information for reporting emergencies. Employees shall be trained on how and when to report a security threat or incident to emergency response personnel.
 - c. Each court shall develop a process for reporting all significant security threats and security incidents involving court employees, judicial officers, or the court facility. Each court shall designate an employee or employees responsible for reporting all significant security threats and incidents.

- d. The director shall make available a mechanism for reporting significant court security threats or security incidents.
6. **Armed Persons in the Courthouse.**
 - a. **Court Security.** The presiding judge of the county shall determine whether court security officers employed by superior courts and justice courts, including consolidated justice and municipal courts, may carry firearms in the courthouse for maintaining court security. The presiding judge of a municipal court shall determine whether court security officers employed by the court may carry firearms in the courthouse for maintaining court security. Armed court security officers shall meet the requirements established by the Director, the ACJA, and any applicable state or local laws. Policies on law enforcement officers carrying firearms in the courthouse are subject to A.R.S. §§ 38-1113 and 11-411.
 - b. The presiding judge of the county shall establish written policy on the carrying of firearms for personal safety by judicial officers or other court employees in superior courts and justice courts, including consolidated justice and municipal courts. The presiding judge of a municipal court shall establish written policy on the carrying of firearms for personal safety by judicial officers or other employees in the municipal court. The policy shall address the following: who is authorized to carry a firearm, training requirements that must be met to be authorized to be armed, process for obtaining authorization to be armed, the procedure for notifying the presiding judge or designee and court security of the status of being armed, the type of firearm(s) and ammunition allowed within the courthouse, and language and requirements in conformity with state and local laws regulating firearms.

E. Entrances and Screening.

1. **Entrances.** Each court shall establish one main entrance through which the public can enter the court building. Additional entryways for the public may be established provided at least one form of screening device is used. Appropriate screening shall be used at entrances established to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
2. **Screening Devices.**
 - a. At a minimum, courts shall implement entryway screening pursuant to this table:

Court Hearing Frequency & Judicial Officers	Level of Entryway Screening
One or more full-time judicial officers; court proceedings occur throughout business hours daily	Entryway screening during courthouse business hours

Full-time or part-time judicial officer(s); courtroom or hearing room proceedings held 2-3 times per week and occur only a few hours a day (court proceedings do not occur daily throughout week)	Entryway screening during hours of court proceedings
Single full-time or part-time judicial officer; court proceedings occur infrequently – generally 1 to 2 days per week and only a few hours each day.	Request for exemption from regular entryway screening standard; however, entryway screening shall occur upon request of judicial officer for a high-conflict or high-risk hearing

- b. Courts not required to have daily entryway screening under the structure set forth herein shall establish policies and procedures for entryway screening for high-conflict or high-risk cases.
- c. Persons conducting entryway screening shall be trained on the operation of the types of screening devices used. Each court shall ensure regular testing and calibration of all screening devices consistent with manufacturers' directions.

3. Signage.

- a. Each court shall have posted signage at entrances regarding prohibited items and warning that persons entering the court are subject to screening.
- b. Each court shall have posted signage at entrances indicating that firearms and dangerous weapons are prohibited pursuant to A.R.S. § 13-3102. Each court shall provide secure lockers at the entryway for storage of firearms pursuant to A.R.S. § 13-3102.01.
- c. Courts shall develop policies and procedures covering prohibited item identification, confiscation, chain of custody, safe handling, and disposition. Policies shall conform to the requirements of A.R.S. § 12-941 on the disposal of unclaimed property. Courts shall collect data on the types and number of prohibited items detected through entryway screening. Monthly reports reflecting data on prohibited items shall be made to the presiding judge or designee and made available to the Local SEPC and County SPEC as needed.
- d. Law enforcement officials who enter the court for any reason other than official business shall be required to store their firearms in secure lockers. Law enforcement's ability to carry firearms in court is subject to A.R.S. § 38-1113.

4. Court Employee and Judicial Officer Screening. Each court shall develop policies and procedures on entryway screening of court employees, judicial officers, and contract service providers.

F. Management of In-Custody Defendants.

1. Entrance for In-Custody Defendants. Each court shall ensure in-custody defendants are brought into and leave the court facility through an entrance separated from any public entrance. Courts that cannot meet this requirement due to architectural or historical limitations shall have written policies and procedures for ensuring in-custody defendants are segregated from the public when entering and exiting the court building.
2. Transport and Control of In-Custody Defendants. In-custody defendants shall be transported, controlled, and always monitored by appropriately trained court security personnel, correctional personnel, or law enforcement officers.

G. Protocols for Taking Individuals into Custody. Each court shall establish written policies and procedures for taking into custody individuals who are not in custody when they are at the court. Each court's policy shall include requirements that, when it is known in advance there is a potential for taking a person into custody, that the agency responsible for transportation of such a person be alerted in advance to facilitate taking the person into custody and transporting them.

H. Facilities and Security Equipment.

1. Duress Alarms.
 - a. Public Transaction Counters. Each court shall have at least one active and monitored duress alarm behind each public transaction counter.
 - b. Courtrooms. Each court shall have active and monitored duress alarms at the judicial officer's bench and the courtroom clerk's station.
 - c. Training and Testing of Duress Alarms. Every employee working in an area of the courthouse equipped with duress alarms shall be shown the location of duress alarms and provided training on the policies and procedures on use of the alarms. Testing of duress alarms shall occur quarterly. Testing shall be documented and reported to the presiding judge or designee and made available to the Local SEPC and County SPEC as needed.
2. Locking Protocols.
 - a. Courtrooms. Each court shall keep all public doors to courtrooms locked when a courtroom is not in use. Each court shall install or obtain locking mechanism for courtroom doors and doors to judicial officer that allow doors to be locked from the inside to facilitate sheltering in place. These locking mechanisms shall meet any regulations for emergency exit and fire safety.
 - b. Jury Deliberation Rooms. Each court shall keep all jury deliberations rooms locked when not in use unless the only access to such rooms is from an otherwise secure area.

3. **Security Sweeps.** Each court shall establish policies and procedures for conducting daily sweeps of vulnerable areas such as courtrooms, hearing rooms, jury deliberation rooms, and the perimeter of the court facility. Reports documenting these sweeps and any findings during the sweeps shall be maintained.
4. **Secured Access to Non-Public Areas.** Areas of the courthouse not open to the public shall be secured by a key control mechanism. Each court shall have policies and procedures for issuance, control, and collection of keys and electronic access devices as well as policies and procedures for obtaining or disabling keys and electronic access devices upon a person's separation from the court.
5. **Window Coverings.** Each court shall have coverings on windows to prevent viewing of the inside of the court from the outside. Window covering shall allow persons inside the courthouse to have visibility of the outside.
6. **Bullet-Resistant Materials.** Courtroom benches and courtroom court employee work areas shall be reinforced with bullet-resistant material.
7. **Public Transaction Counter Barriers.** Each courthouse shall have a barrier between the public and court employees at public transaction areas. The type and manner of barrier shall be a local decision based upon the architecture, design, and operation of the courthouse.
8. **Security Cameras.** Each court facility shall have video cameras with recording capability at entryways and common public areas. Each court shall develop policies and procedures for the retention, storage, and destruction of security camera recordings.
9. **Exterior Lighting.** Each court facility shall have exterior lighting at building entrances and exits.
10. **Protection of Critical Areas.**
 - a. **Outside of Court Facility.** Each court shall prevent unauthorized vehicle access to critical areas. Courts that cannot meet this standard due to architectural or historical limitations shall have written policies and procedures for monitoring of areas where vehicles can be in close proximity to the building.
 - b. **Inside of Courthouse.** Each court shall prevent unauthorized access to critical areas such as electrical supply, roof, data centers, electrical rooms, and other electronic storage areas. Courts with data centers shall meet the requirements of ACJA § 1-507.